

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 14282 291854Z
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SUBJECT: SOVIET MEDIA BLOW HOT AND COLD

REF: MOSCOW 14202

SUMMARY: CENTRAL PRESS SEPTEMBER 28-29 FEATURES GROMYKO
MEETINGS WITH PRESIDENT CARTER AND PROVIDES GENERALLY
OPTIMISTIC COVERAGE OF SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS, WHILE
SEPTEMBER 28 TELEVISION PROGRAM DIRECTS
VICIOUS ATTACK ON AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE. END SUMMARY.

1. PRAVDA (SEPTEMBER 29) AND IZVESTIYA (SEPTEMBER 28)
BOTH CARRY REPORTS OF FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO'S
SECOND MEETING WITH PRESIDENT CARTER AT THE WHITE HOUSE.
PRAVDA ALSO PRINTS TASS COVERAGE OF GROMYKO'S REMARKS
TO REPORTERS AFTER THE MEETING WHICH STRESS PROGRESS
MADE IN BRINGING TWO SIDES CLOSER TOGETHER ON QUESTIONS
RELATED TO SALT AGREEMENT AND "FIRM INTENTION" TO
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 14282 291854Z

CONCLUDE AGREEMENT.

2. SAME ISSUE OF PRAVDA ALSO CARRIES TASS REPORT,
ENTITLED "FOR CONSTRUCTIVE COOPERATION," ON GEORGE
KENNAN'S TESTIMONY BEFORE HOUSE SUB-COMMITTEE ON
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS. HERE TOO EMPHASIS IS ON THE
POSITIVE, WITH KENNAN QUOTED AS SAYING THE SOVIET

GOVERNMENT "IS SINCERELY INTERESTED IN PEACE" AND THAT HE DOESN'T KNOW OF ANY OTHER COUNTRY WHERE THE SECOND WORLD WAR LEFT SUCH DEEP TRACES AS IN THE SOVIET UNION, WHICH LOST MORE THAN TWENTY MILLION PEOPLE. HE IS ALSO CITED AS OPPOSING DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEUTRON BOMB AND THE MX ROCKET BECAUSE IT WOULD COMPLICATE STRATEGIC ARMS NEGOTIATIONS.

3. AT THE SAME TIME, SOVIET TELEVISION ON SEPTEMBER 28 SHOWED ON PRIME TIME (1830-1920), AN ANTI-AMERICAN PROGRAM ENTITLED "AMERICAN REPORTAGE". PROGRAM BEGAN WITH INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY GUS HALL OF CPUSA AND FOCUSED ON THE NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF LIFE IN US WITH STRESS ON THE SENSATIONAL, THE BIZARRE AND THE REPELLENT. SUBJECT MATTER INCLUDED:

--CLIPS FROM AMERICAN HORROR MOVIE, VIEWS OF A SLEAZY PORNO DISTRICT, AND OTHER EVIDENCES OF HOW GREEDY PRODUCERS PANDER TO THE LOWEST LEVEL OF PUBLIC TASTE;
--SHOTS OF RIOT IN FRONT OF SCHOOL;
--SEARCHING LOOK AT SEEMINGLY TRANQUIL SMALL TOWN (MT. VERNON), CONTRASTING ITS PROSPEROUS HOMES WITH POVERTY OF ITS BLACK DISTRICT, AND THEN DESCRIBING WANTON KILLING OF YOUNG BLACK ON STREET BY POLICEMAN;
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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 14282 291854Z

--IN-DEPTH EXAMINATION OF AMERICAN ETHNIC OF CONSUMERISM, INCLUDING CLIPS OF TV QUIZ SHOW WHERE INANE HOUSEWIVES COMPETE FOR LAVISH PRIZES, DAZZLING DISPLAYS OF PRODUCTS (WHICH ONLY THE FEW CAN AFFORD TO BUY); AND COMMENTS ABOUT THE SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF CUT-THROAT COMPETITION; BANKRUPTCIES, JOB INSECURITY, AND UNEMPLOYMENT--TO SOUND OF SUBDUED, MELANCHOLY VIOLINS;
--EXAMINATIONS OF PARADOX OF MASS POVERTY AND CRIME IN MIDST OF PLENTY; BLIGHTED URBAN AREAS, BLIGHTED LIVES, AND PROTEST DEMONSTRATIONS. PROGRAM CONCLUDED WITH INTERVIEWS DEPICTING IGNORANCE OF MOST AMERICANS ABOUT USSR, AND PRAISE OF USSR BY THOSE WHO ARE INFORMED.

4. COMMENT: EXCEPT FOR CURRENT ISSUE OF LITGAZ (SEE REFTTEL), PRESS CONTINUES RESTRAINED HANDLING OF US. TV PROGRAM FALLS SQUARELY INTO LITGAZ FORMAT, GUGGESTING THAT DIFFERENT SEGMENTS OF SOVIET INFORMATION MEDIA ARE FOLLOWING DIFFERENT MARCHING ORDERS, WITH THE POLITICALLY "AUTHORITATIVE" PUBLICATIONS STRESSING POSSIBILITY OF IMPROVED US-SOVIET RELATIONS IN DETENTE CONTEXT, WHILE SOME OF THOSE AIMED AT SOVIET INTELLECTUALS AND GENERAL

PUBLIC ENGAGE IN A VICIOUS CAMPAIGN IN
CSCE CONTEXT.
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